

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Patent Application No. 10/540,865

Attorney Docket No.: Q88610

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Please replace Figures 6 and 7 with the replacement drawings submitted herewith. No new matter has been added.

Attachment: Attachments: Two (2) Replacement Sheets (Figs. 6 and 7)

REMARKS

By this Amendment, claims 8-14 are added for examination, therefore, claims 1-14 are all the claims pending in the application.

Claim 5 is objected to because of certain informalities.

Claims 1 and 7 are rejected as being unpatentable over admitted prior art in view of Ikeguchi.

Claims 2-4 and 6 are objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim.

The drawings are objected to.

The Applicant traverses the rejections and requests reconsideration.

Objections to the drawings

Figs. 6 and 7 have been marked "Prior Art" to overcome the objections thereto.

Amendments to the Specification

Applicant respectfully amends the Specification to correct a minor error. Applicant notes that JP-A-12-198094 that is mentioned at page 1 of the present application is the same as Japanese unexamined publication JP2000-198094. This is because prior to 2000, the Japanese unexamined publications had been referred to by naming the era such as Hei 5, Hei 6, and so on. However, from the year 2000, JPO changed the system and documents were referred to using the Christian era.

Claim Objections

Claim 5 has been amended to overcome the objection thereto.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the admitted Prior Art (Fig. 6 and Fig. 7, and corresponding text pages 2-4) in view of Ikeguchi (U.S. Patent No. 6,781,339).

The Applicant respectfully notes that the effective filing date of the present application is December 22, 2003. On the other hand, the issue date of Ikeguchi is August, 2004. Therefore, it qualifies as prior art only under section 102 (e). Applicant respectfully submits that Ikeguchi and the present invention are owned by the same entity, and therefore, under section 103(c), Ikeguchi does not qualify as prior art even under section 102(e) for obviousness rejections.

The Examiner is requested to withdraw the pending rejection of claims 1 and 7.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 2-4 and 6 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to hold the status of these claims in abeyance pending resolution of the status of the base claims

New Claims

Applicant respectfully submits new claims 8-14 for examination.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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